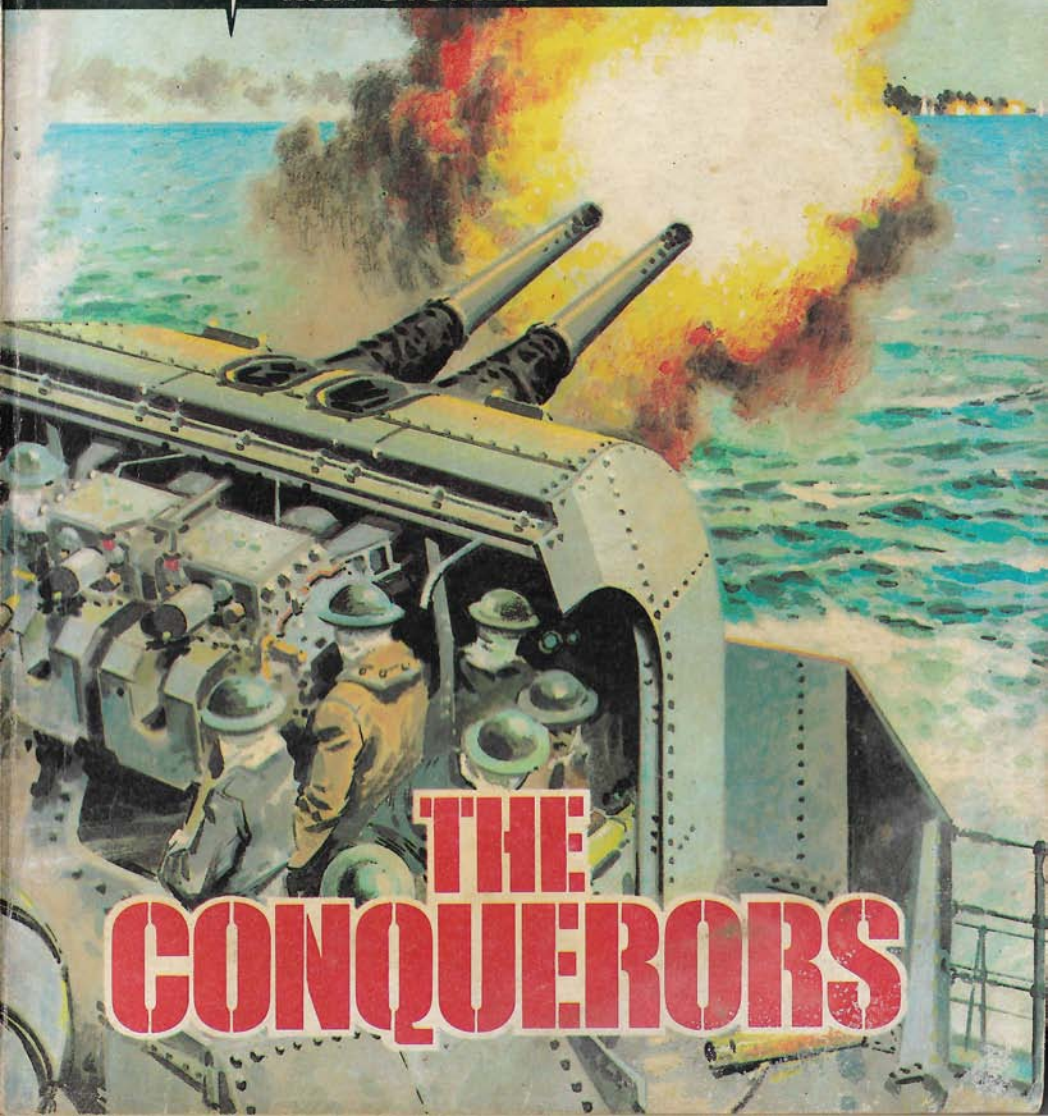


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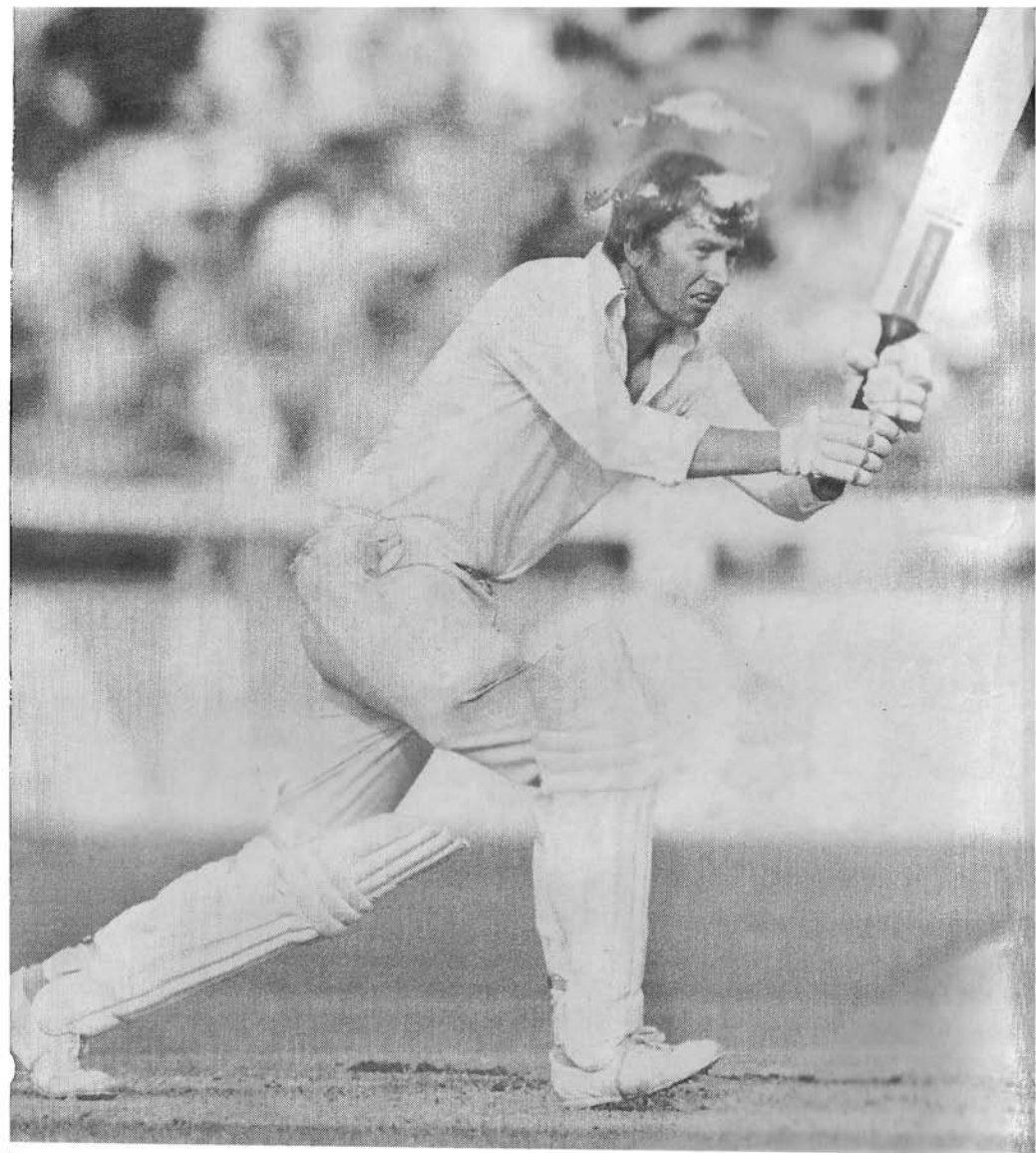
Commando

WAR STORIES IN PICTURES

75



THE CONQUERORS

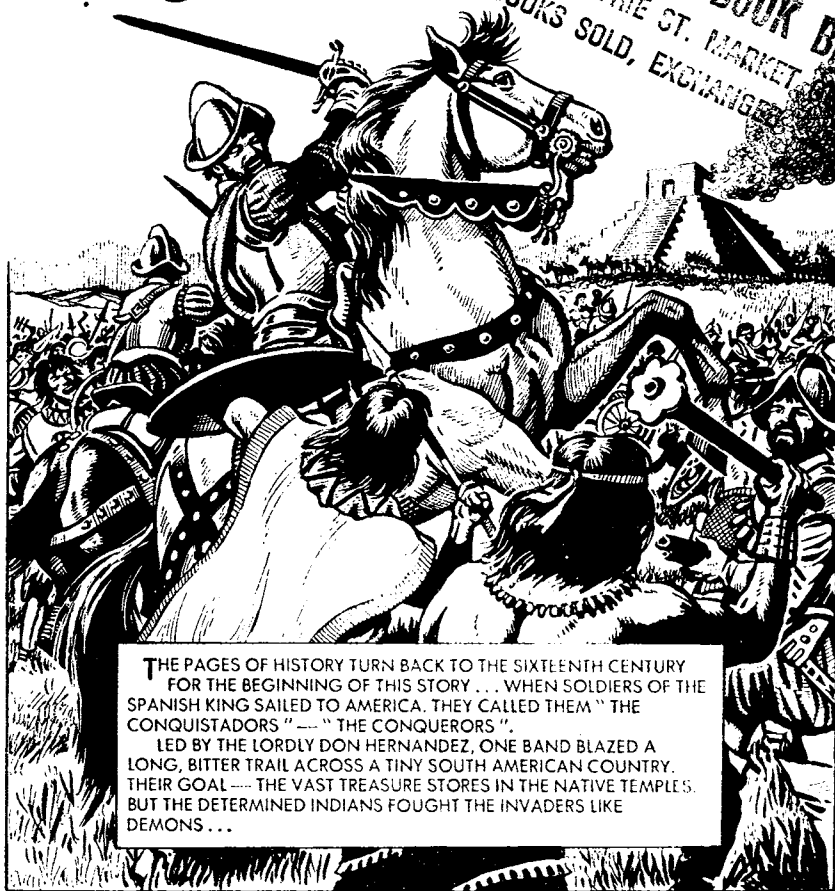


Stars of Cricket — Brian Rose

BOOK NOOK
GEELONG

The CONQUERORS

122 RYRIE ST. MARKET
BOOKS SOLD, EXCHANGED



THE PAGES OF HISTORY TURN BACK TO THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY FOR THE BEGINNING OF THIS STORY... WHEN SOLDIERS OF THE SPANISH KING SAILED TO AMERICA. THEY CALLED THEM "THE CONQUISTADORS" — "THE CONQUERORS".

LED BY THE LORDLY DON HERNANDEZ, ONE BAND BLAZED A LONG, BITTER TRAIL ACROSS A TINY SOUTH AMERICAN COUNTRY. THEIR GOAL — THE VAST TREASURE STORES IN THE NATIVE TEMPLES. BUT THE DETERMINED INDIANS FOUGHT THE INVADERS LIKE DEMONS...

THESE TOUGH, SPANISH SOLDIERS OF FORTUNE REPELLED ALL ATTACKS, YET BECAME WEAKER AS THE MONTHS PASSED. EVEN WITH THEIR PRECIOUS BOOTY BEING CARRIED BY CAPTURED INDIANS FORCED TO SERVE AS PORTERS, IT BECAME CLEAR THAT THEIR RETURN JOURNEY WAS GOING TO BE MORE HAZARDOUS STILL.



THE SPANISH SECOND-IN-COMMAND WAS RIGHT TO WORRY. WITH THE INDIANS PREPARED TO BIDE THEIR TIME, THE TREK BECAME A DEATH MARCH WITH ONE AMBUSH AFTER ANOTHER.



THE JUNGLE SWAMPS ALSO RAVAGED MANY WITH FEVER. THE VICTIMS WERE SIMPLY LEFT TO DIE WHERE THEY FELL.



THEN ONE NIGHT THE INDIAN PRISONERS REBELLED.



THE ALARM WAS RAISED IMMEDIATELY. ANGRILY SOME OF THE CONQUERORS GAVE CHASE, EVEN THOUGH THE JUNGLE LOOKED DARK AND HOSTILE.



THEIR LEADER'S WORDS WENT UNHEEDED. THE FOOLHARDY SOLDIERS WERE NEVER SEEN AGAIN.

BY DAWN THE NEXT DAY, DON HERNANDEZ WAS FACING A MUTINY. HIS MEN ONLY WANTED TO TAKE ALONG ENOUGH OF THE TREASURE AS THEY COULD COMFORTABLY MANAGE.



DON HERNANDEZ WAS A BORN LEADER OF MEN WITH A PERSUASIVE TONGUE.



SURPRISINGLY THE NEXT FEW DAYS PASSED WITHOUT INCIDENT. AT LAST THE CONQUISTADORS MARCHED WITHIN SIGHT OF THE SMOKING VOLCANO WHICH WAS THEIR IMPRESSIVE LANDMARK.



THEY SOON GOT THEIR ANSWER. THE NATIVES HAD GONE AHEAD OF THE SPANIARDS TO ATTACK THE INVADERS' SHIP. THERE WERE NO SURVIVORS . . . THE VESSEL WAS IN FLAMES.



THE SPANIARDS KNEW THAT THEY WERE FINISHED, FOR THE INDIANS WOULD SOON ATTACK IN FORCE. SO WHILE HIS SECOND-IN-COMMAND MADE PREPARATIONS FOR THE FINAL BATTLE, DON HERNANDEZ AND A SQUAD OF MEN MARCHED OUT TO THE SLOPES OF THE VOLCANO WITH ALL THE BOOTY.



WHEN THE SPANISH LEADER RETURNED TO THE BATTLEFIELD, HE DISCOVERED THE ENEMY ALREADY WAITING TO ATTACK. THE DEPLETED BAND OF CONQUISTADORS WERE WELL OUTNUMBERED.



THE INDIANS SWARMED FOWARD, TO BE MOWN DOWN BY MUSKET-FIRE. YET FOR EACH MAN WHO FELL, THERE WERE AT LEAST TWO TO TAKE HIS PLACE.



THEY FELL UPON THE SPANIARDS IN A RAGE. THE BATTLE DEVELOPED INTO A DESPERATE HAND-TO-HAND STRUGGLE.



GRADUALLY THOUGH, THE ODDS TOLD UNTIL AT LAST ONLY DON HERNANDEZ REMAINED ALIVE. HE TOO FINALLY FELL ON THAT FOREIGN FIELD.



WITH HIM DIED THE SECRET OF THE TREASURE'S EXACT WHEREABOUTS. HE HAD MADE SURE THE MEN WHO HAD BURIED IT WERE NOT SPIED UPON.

MANY HUNDREDS OF YEARS LATER, TROUBLE CAME CLOSE TO THAT COUNTRY AGAIN. NOW IT WAS WORLD WAR TWO — A GERMAN CRUISER WAS AT LARGE, SINKING ALLIED SHIPPING OFF THE SOUTH AMERICAN COAST AT AN ALARMING RATE.



ON BOARD THIS STRICKEN SHIP, SEAMAN BILLY BAINES WATCHED HELPLESSLY AS SHELL AFTER SHELL FOUND ITS MARK.



THE MERCHANT SHIP WAS ONLY VERY LIGHTLY ARMED.

A TOUGH, STUBBORN BLOKE WHO HAD BEEN AT SEA SINCE HE WAS FOURTEEN, BILLY IGNORED THE SHELLS BLASTING AROUND HIM IN ORDER TO HELP A STUNNED COMRADE.

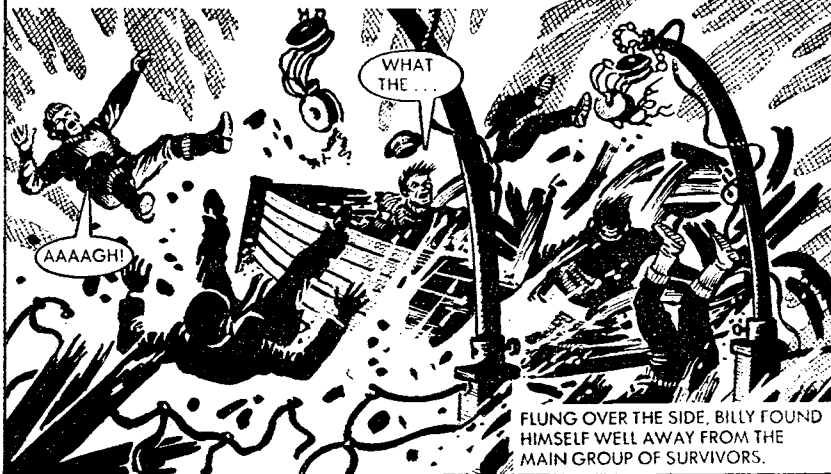


HE HAD SAILED ON THIS SHIP FOR A GOOD FEW YEARS NOW. ALMOST EVERY MAN ABOARD HE LOOKED ON AS A FRIEND.

THE ORDER TO ABANDON SHIP HAD ALREADY GONE OUT. BILLY FOUND HIMSELF ONE OF THE LAST LIVING PEOPLE LEFT ON BOARD AS HE STAGGERED ALONG WITH HIS UNCONSCIOUS LOAD.



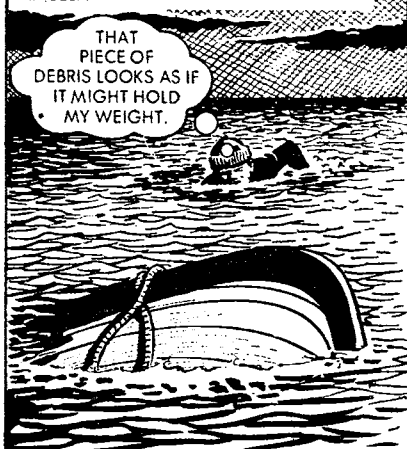
TRAGEDY STRUCK AN INSTANT LATER. ANOTHER GERMAN SHELL EXPLODED ON TARGET AND THE LIFEBOAT BILLY HAD BEEN HEADING FOR WAS BLOWN APART.



FLUNG OVER THE SIDE, BILLY FOUND HIMSELF WELL AWAY FROM THE MAIN GROUP OF SURVIVORS.

THE MAN HE HAD BEEN CARRYING HAD DISAPPEARED ALSO, SO HE WAS TOTALLY ALONE... BUT DETERMINED TO SAVE HIMSELF.

THAT
PIECE OF
DEBRIS LOOKS AS IF
IT MIGHT HOLD
MY WEIGHT.



SLOWLY THE SHIPWRECKED SAILOR DRIFTED AWAY FROM THE BURNING VESSEL. TOO WEAK EVEN TO CRY OUT FOR HELP, HE ALLOWED FATE TO TAKE ITS COURSE.



IF THE SHARKS OR EXPOSURE DID NOT GET HIM, THE SEA WOULD. IT WAS A GRIM PROSPECT.

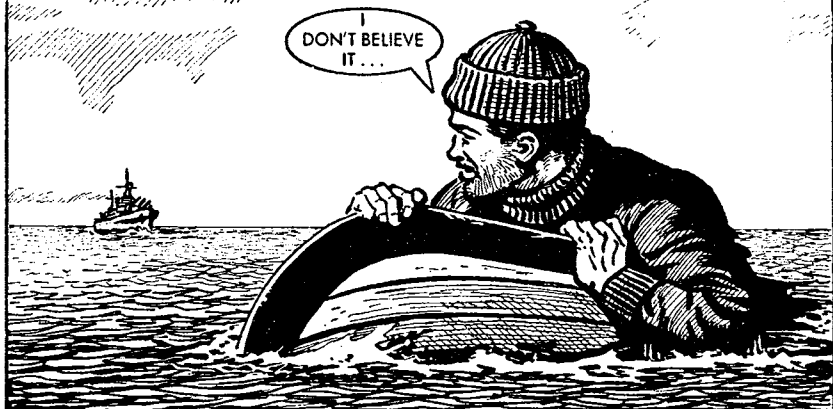
MEANWHILE MOST OF THE BRITISH SURVIVORS HAD BEEN PICKED UP BY THE ENEMY CRUISER, THE VERY SHIP WHICH HAD SUNK THEM. AMONG SAILORS THERE WAS STILL A CODE OF HONOUR OF SORTS.



SEE THAT THEY
GET HOT DRINKS AND
BLANKETS IMMEDIATELY

JAWOHL,
HERR KAPITÄN.

AS FOR BILLY, HE WAS NOT DESTINED TO DROWN. AFTER A NIGHT AND NEARLY A FULL DAY IN THE WATER, HE TOO WAS MIRACULOUSLY SAVED WHEN A SHARP-EYED LOOK-OUT ON A BRITISH CRUISER SPOTTED HIM.



HE WAS SOON HAULED TO SAFETY ABOARD THIS PATROLLING SHIP. ALTHOUGH TIRED AND CONFUSED, HE COULD STILL SPARE A THOUGHT FOR HIS LOST COMRADES.



CLEARLY ALL THE OTHER SURVIVORS WERE NOW IN GERMAN HANDS. THE THOUGHT OF THIS THREW BILLY INTO A RAGE AND HE ROUNDED ON THE NEAREST SAILOR TO HIM.

YOU LOT SAVED
ME FROM THE DRINK
BUT WHY WEREN'T YOU ON
THE SPOT WHEN THE
JERRIES ATTACKED?

IT'S A
BIG OCEAN
— WE CAN'T BE
EVERYWHERE
AT ONCE!

ABLE-SEAMAN DEREK THOMAS WAS AS CONCERNED ABOUT THE MISSING MATELOTS AS THE NEXT MAN. BUT HE WAS JUST AS TOUGH AS BILLY WITH A TEMPER TO MATCH ... AND HE TOOK NO ABUSE FROM ANYBODY.

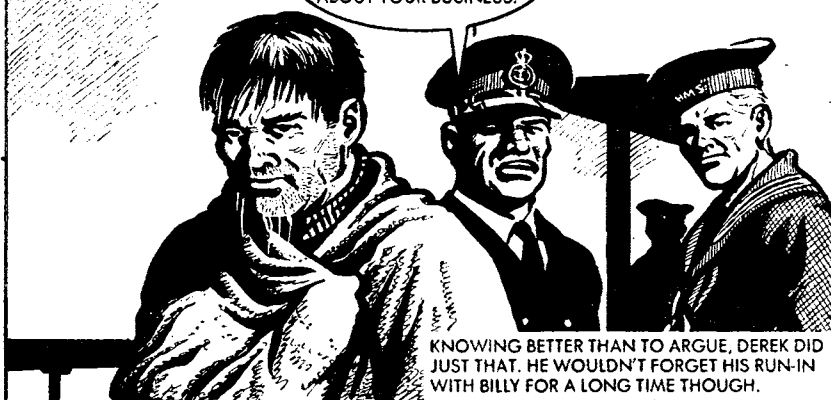
SO THE TWO MEN DEVELOPED AN INSTANT DISLIKE TO EACH OTHER, WITH TEMPER THREATENING TO GET OUT OF HAND. FORTUNATELY A PETTY-OFFICER WAS NEARBY TO PREVENT FISTS FLYING.

I'LL
SHOW
YOU ...

BREAK IT UP.
YOU TWO, OR THERE'LL
BE REAL TROUBLE!

SENT OFF TO GET SOME REST, BILLY WAS NURSING A DEEP GRUDGE BY NOW.

GO AND REST UP.
THE CAPTAIN WILL
WANT TO SEE YOU LATER.
AS FOR YOU, THOMAS, GO
ABOUT YOUR BUSINESS.



KNOWING BETTER THAN TO ARGUE, DEREK DID JUST THAT. HE WOULDN'T FORGET HIS RUN-IN WITH BILLY FOR A LONG TIME THOUGH.

ACTUALLY ALL THE CRUISER'S COMPANY WAS ON EDGE FOR A VERY GOOD REASON. THEY HAD BEEN HUNTING THE ENEMY RAIDER FOR WEEKS AND THE GERMANS HAD CONSTANTLY BEEN GIVING THEM THE SLIP.

THAT BLOKE
HAD A POINT,
I SUPPOSE. WE'RE NEVER IN
THE RIGHT PLACE AT
THE RIGHT TIME.

I
KNOW. WE NEED
ACTION BAD.



A FEW DAYS LATER THE BRITISH SAILORS GOT THEIR WISH WITH A POSSIBLE SIGHTING.

SMOKE ON THE HORIZON, SIR.

LET'S HOPE IT'S THE JERRY CRUISER...

IT WAS INDEED THE ENEMY SHIP. THE BRITISH CRAFT GAVE EAGER CHASE.

FIRE!

NOW WE'VE GOT 'EM!

A CLASSIC SEA-BATTLE DEVELOPED IN WHICH THE TWO SHIPS MATCHED EACH OTHER BLOW FOR BLOW. SOON SIGNS OF SEVERE DAMAGE BEGAN TO SHOW ON BOTH CONTESTANTS.

HIMMEL! THE BRITISH FIRE IS TOO ACCURATE FOR MY LIKING.

DON'T WORRY, HERR KAPITÄN. WE'RE GIVING PLENTY BACK.



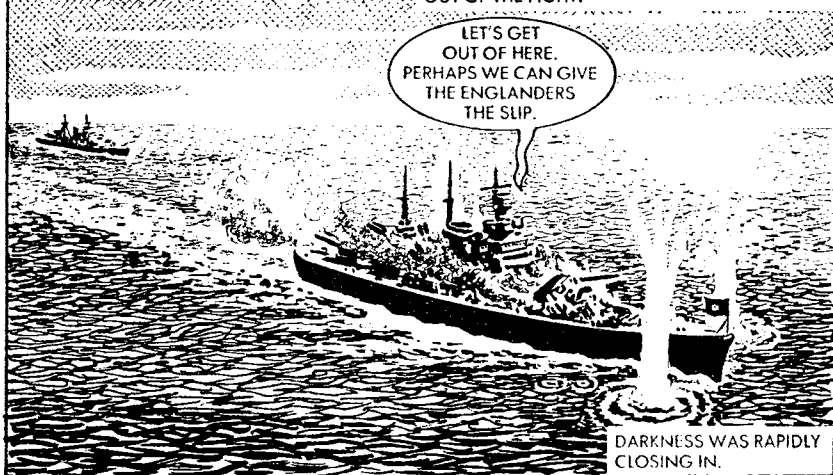
AT HIS GUN, DEREK HAD PLENTY TO OCCUPY HIS TIME AS THEY FIRED OFF ROUND AFTER ROUND.



BILLY TOO KEPT BUSY. THERE WERE PLENTY OF WOUNDED TO BE ATTENDED TO. IT WAS A HECTIC TIME FOR ALL.



THE BATTLE RAGED LONG AND HARD UNTIL THE SEVERELY-DAMAGED GERMAN CRUISER PULLED OUT OF THE FIGHT.



DARKNESS WAS RAPIDLY CLOSING IN.

THE BRITISH PURSUED THEIR QUARRY LATE INTO THE NIGHT. BUT THEY TOO HAD SUFFERED DAMAGE — THE CUNNING ENEMY ESCAPED YET AGAIN.



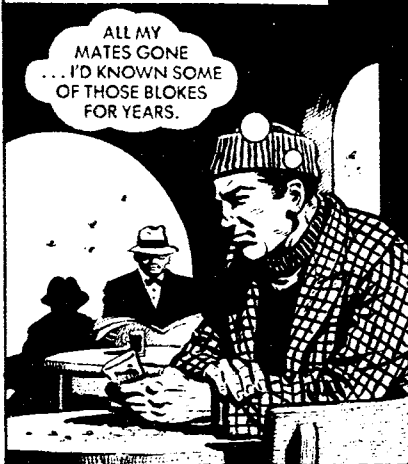
IN THE MAIN PORT, AS WAS THE CUSTOM IN A NEUTRAL LAND, THE BRITISH WERE GIVEN SEVENTY-TWO HOURS TO CARRY OUT REPAIRS. SOME OF THE CREW WERE ALLOWED TO GO ASHORE FOR A FEW HOURS, BILLY AND DEREK AMONG THEM.



WITH THE GOVERNMENT PRO-NAZI, THE BRITISH CONSULAR REPRESENTATIVE HAD HIS SUSPICIONS HOWEVER.



AS FOR BILLY, HE SOON FOUND A DOCKSIDE BAR WHERE HE COULD SIT AND BROOD.



DEREK TOOK EXCEPTION TO THAT REMARK. HE HAD LONG SINCE REALISED THERE WAS NO FUTURE IN MOPING. THEY WERE AT WAR — CASUALTIES WERE PART AND PARCEL OF IT ALL.



ANGRIER WORDS FOLLOWED AS BILLY ROSE TO CONFRONT DEREK WHO, ANGERED BY BILLY'S ATTITUDE, FELT OBLIGED TO RETALIATE.



THAT DID IT. MOMENTS
LATER THE TWO SAILORS WERE
LOCKED IN A BRAWL.



THE SCRAP WAS JUST REACHING ITS PEAK WHEN BATON-
WIELDING POLICEMEN ARRIVED TO BREAK IT UP. THEY SEEMED
EAGER TO JOIN IN THE FRAY.



THE LAW OFFICERS SINGLED DEREK OUT AS THE CULPRIT AND BECAME EXCESSIVELY HARSH. CLEARLY THEY HAD SOME KIND OF DISLIKE TOWARDS SERVICEMEN.



THE POLICE JUST WOULD NOT LISTEN THOUGH. THE OTHER TWO ROYAL NAVY MEN AND BILLY JOINED IN ON DEREK'S SIDE — THE BRAWL BECAME A FREE-FOR-ALL. MAN TO MAN, THE POLICE FOUND THE BRITISH LADS A TOUGH PROPOSITION.



AS THE SCRAP SPREAD TO ALL CORNERS OF THE BAR, REINFORCEMENTS WERE SENT FOR. SOON A FRESH BATCH OF POLICEMEN ARRIVED.



THE NEW ARRIVALS QUICKLY GOT STUCK IN. DEREK AND BILLY CAUGHT THEIR FULL FORCE, AS DID A CIVILIAN WHO HAD BEEN WATCHING IT ALL FROM A CORNER TABLE.



TAKEN BY SURPRISE
THE BYSTANDER CRIED
OUT ... IN GERMAN.

AS THE MYSTERY MAN ROSE TO FLEE, DEREK AND BILLY REALISED IMMEDIATELY THAT THE GERMAN WAS SOME KIND OF SPY. HE HAD TO BE STOPPED.



UNITED IN A COMMON CAUSE, THEY REACHED THE STREET IN TIME TO SEE THE INTRUDER SLIPPING INTO AN ALLEY.



THEY PURSUED THEIR QUARRY, CLOSELY. CHASED THEMSELVES BY A POLICEMAN.



HALFWAY ALONG THE ALLEY THE GERMAN TURNED TO CONFRONT HIS FOLLOWERS. PULLING OUT A PISTOL, HE FIRED A SERIES OF SHOTS WHICH JUST MISSED THE TWO BRITISH LADS.



THE BULLETS DID FIND A TARGET, HOWEVER. THE PURSUING POLICEMAN KEELED OVER, DEAD.

HIS PISTOL NOW EMPTY, THE KILLER HURLED IT AT THE TWO SAILORS WHO WERE BADLY SHOCKED BY THIS BRUTAL SWITCH OF EVENTS.



BY THE TIME THEY COULD THINK CLEARLY, THE GERMAN WAS LOST IN THE MAZE OF BACK ALLEYS.

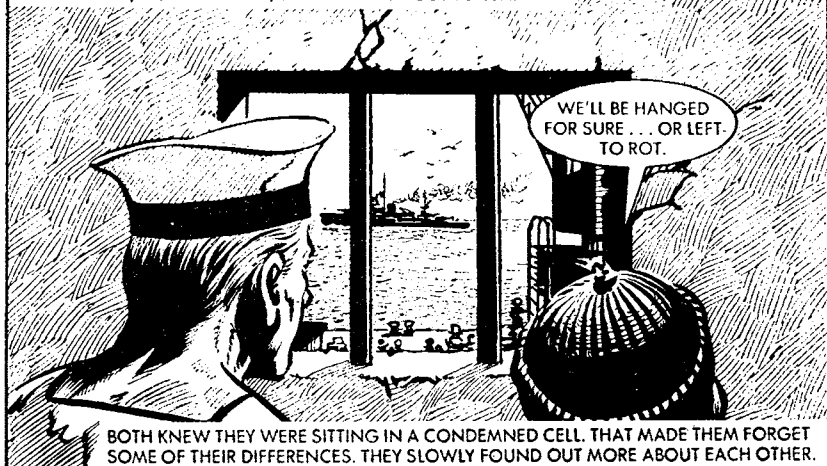
IMMEDIATELY MORE POLICE ARRIVED. ONLY DEREK AND BILLY WERE TO BE FOUND AT THE SCENE, DEREK HAVING PICKED UP THE MURDER WEAPON.



THE EVIDENCE AGAINST THEM WAS STRONG. INEVITABLY THE TWO SAILORS WOUND UP IN JAIL ON A MURDER CHARGE. THEIR ONLY VISITOR WAS THE VERY CONCERNED BRITISH CONSULAR REPRESENTATIVE.



HOWEVER THE ACCUSED MEN FELT THAT THERE WAS LITTLE HOPE OF SALVATION, ESPECIALLY WHEN THEY WERE STILL BEHIND BARS AS THEIR SHIP, NOW REPAIRED, STEAMED BACK OUT TO SEA.



DESPITE ALL THE VISITS FROM THE CONSUL REPRESENTATIVE, TIME PASSED SLOWLY. IT WAS SO UTTERLY BORING UNTIL ONE DAY THEY WERE GIVEN A NEIGHBOUR — A TIPSY CHARACTER WITH A TEXAN DRAWL.



FULL OF LIVELY YARNS, JAKE EXPLAINED HE LIVED IN THE JUNGLE, TABOO COUNTRY WHERE EVEN THE POLICE FEARED TO GO. DE REK AND BILLY LISTENED TO HIM INTENTLY.



BILLY WAS RIGHT. ON THIS PARTICULAR TRIP THE PROSPECTOR HAD BEEN ARRESTED AS SOON AS HE SET FOOT IN THE CITY. HE FELT HE KNEW WHY.



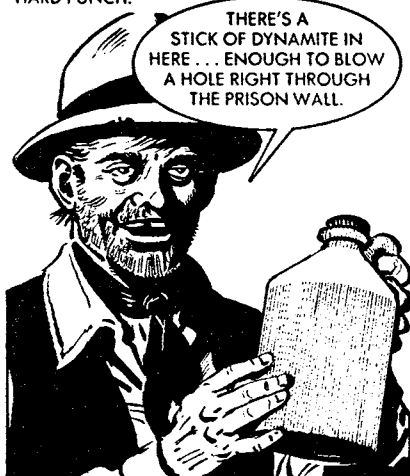
THE AMERICAN HAD WORKED IT ALL OUT — HE LET THE SAILORS INTO A DEVASTATING SECRET OF A SIGHT HE HAD SEEN NEAR HIS REMOTE CAMP.



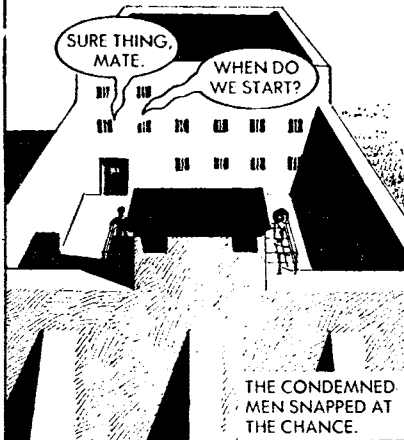
THE NEWS EXCITED THE TWO SAILORS BUT IT WAS PAINFULLY CLEAR THAT THE AMERICAN KNEW TOO MUCH FOR HIS OWN SAFETY, ESPECIALLY NOW THAT THE CORRUPT GOVERNMENT HAD HIM UNDER LOCK AND KEY.



THE WHISKY JUG HE HAD BEEN CLUTCHING SO PROTECTIVELY PACKED A PARTICULARLY HARD PUNCH.



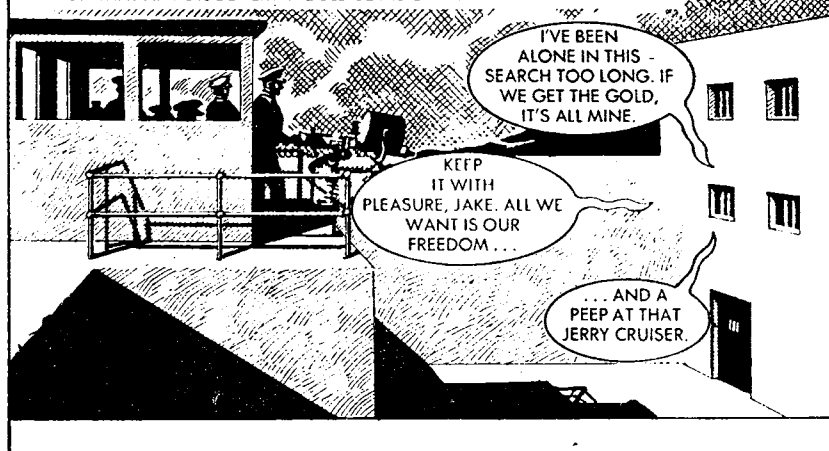
JAKE FELT THAT HE MIGHT NEED SOME HELP HOWEVER. HE OFFERED THE SAILORS A CHANCE TO GO ALONG.



THE MUCH-TRAVELLED AMERICAN ALSO HAD PLANS THAT DID NOT INCLUDE BILLY AND DEREK. HE TOLD THEM OF A DEEP-ROOTED OBSESSION WHICH CENTRED ON THE LEGENDS OF THE FORTUNE BURIED BY DON HERNANDEZ AND HIS LUCKLESS MEN IN THE PAST.



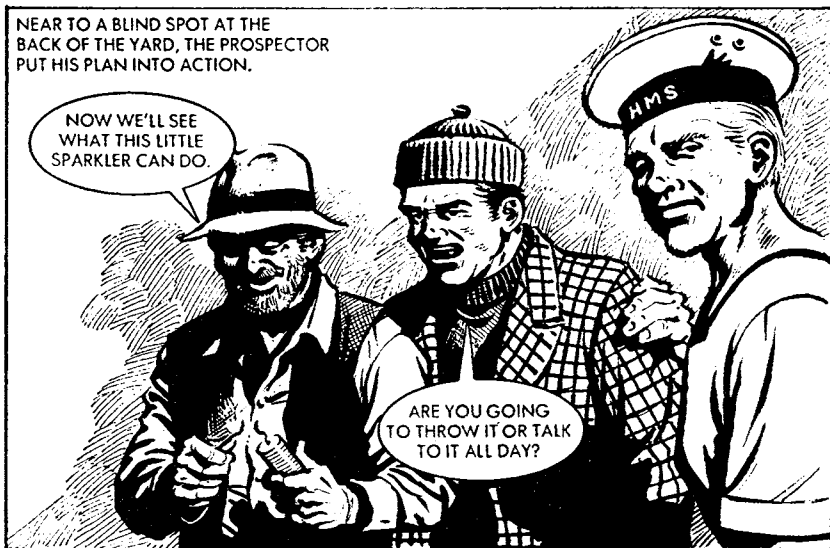
BEING FRIENDLY WITH THE INDIANS WHO LIVED IN THE REMOTE AREA, THE PROSPECTOR HAD A BETTER CHANCE THAN ANY OF HIS FORE-RUNNERS OF FINDING THE FABULOUS HOARD. HE MADE IT CLEAR TO THE BRITISH PRISONERS THOUGH THAT ANY DISCOVERY WOULD BE HIS OWN.

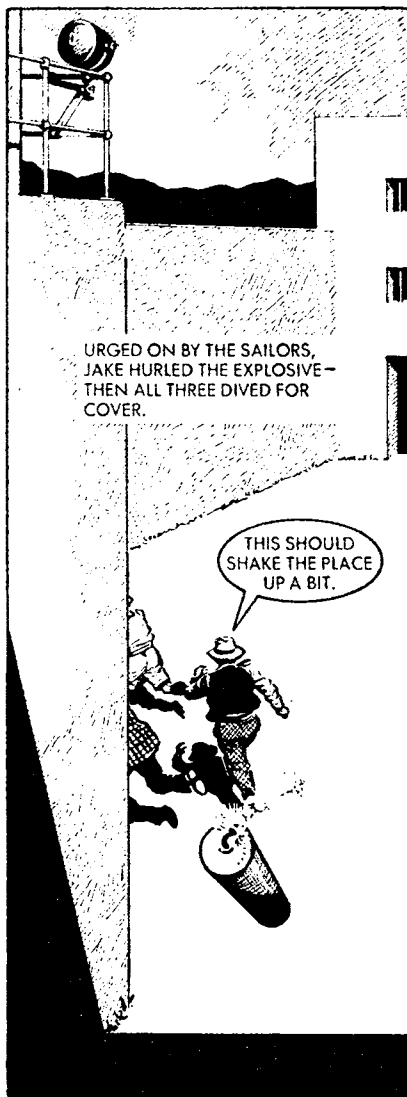


THE NEXT DAY, THE TRIO WERE ALLOWED IN THE PRISON YARD TOGETHER TO EXERCISE. JAKE, WITH THE DYNAMITE UP HIS SLEEVE, ORDERED THE SAILORS TO STICK CLOSE BY.



NEAR TO A BLIND SPOT AT THE BACK OF THE YARD, THE PROSPECTOR PUT HIS PLAN INTO ACTION.





THE ESCAPERS WERE AWAY EVEN BEFORE THE SMOKE HAD CLEARED. BEHIND THEM THE GUARDS RAN AROUND IN CONFUSION, STILL UNCERTAIN OF WHAT HAD ACTUALLY TAKEN PLACE.



USING ALL HIS CUNNING, JAKE LED THEM OUT OF THE CITY AND ON TO SAFETY. THERE WERE TIMES THOUGH WHEN RECAPTURE BECAME A REAL POSSIBILITY.



INCREDIBLY THEIR LUCK DID HOLD. SOON THE ESCAPERS WERE ON THEIR WAY TO THE FORBIDDEN TERRITORY WHERE JAKE HAD HIS CAMP.



BILLY HAD NO NEED TO WORRY. THEIR AMERICAN GUIDE WAS AN HONoured FRIEND OF THE MYSTERIOUS JUNGLE TRIBESMEN WHO WERE THE DESCENDANTS OF THE NATIVES WHO HAD FOUGHT THE SPANISH.



THE JUNGLE SOON BECAME ALMOST IMPENETRABLE. THE NARROW PATHS WERE HIDDEN BY TANGLES OF BUSHES AND GRASSES. MUD SUCKED AT THE MEN AS THEY SPLASHED THROUGH FEVER-RIDDEN SWAMPS.



AT LAST THEY EMERGED AT AN INDIAN CAMP, CONCEALED DEEP IN THE WILD COUNTRY.



THE INDIANS WERE A FIERCE-LOOKING BUNCH BUT WELCOMED JAKE AND HIS FRIENDS WITH OPEN ARMS. BEFORE LONG THE THREE FUGITIVES WERE TAKING A WELL-EARNED REST.



THEY HAD PLANNED TO STAY IN THE VILLAGE FOR A FEW DAYS BEFORE PRESSING ON TOWARDS THEIR OBJECTIVE. UNFORTUNATELY TOKKAMATTA, THE INDIAN CHIEF, HAD NEWS THAT CHANGED ALL THAT.



THE DISTINCTIVE VOLCANO OVERSHADOWED THE ANCHORAGE USED BY THE SPANIARDS IN THE DAYS OF THE CONQUISTADORS ... AND NOW BEING USED BY THE GERMAN NAVY.

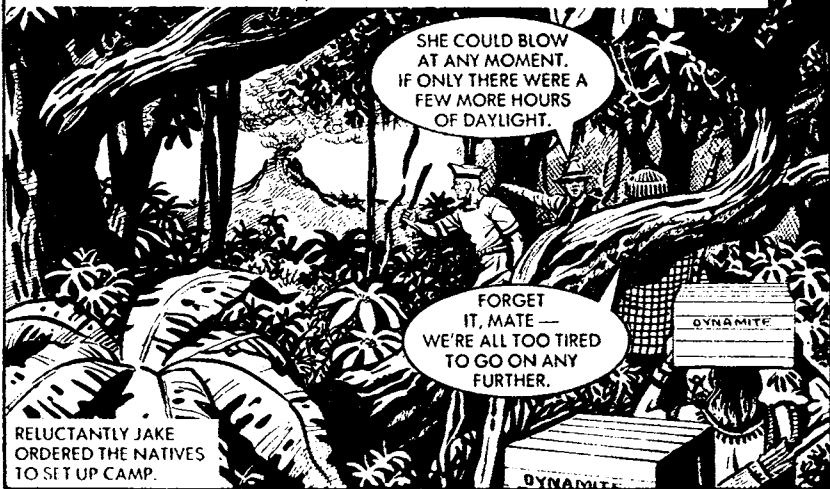
NOT WASTING A SECOND, THE TOUGH PROSPECTOR WAS ON HIS FEET ORGANISING THE TREK THAT WAS STILL TO COME. THERE WERE SUPPLIES TO BE SORTED OUT, WEAPONS TO BE CHECKED.



AT LAST THE PARTY WAS READY AND THE HUNTERS SET OFF WITHOUT DELAY. THE THREE ESCAPERS NOW CARRYING RIFLES. SOME OF THE INDIANS WENT ALONG AS BEARERS AND GUIDES.



THE GROUP PRESSED ON DETERMINEDLY THROUGHOUT THE REST OF THAT DAY. FINALLY, AS DARKNESS BEGAN TO CLOSE IN, THEY CAUGHT SIGHT OF THE MENACING VOLCANO.



SHE COULD BLOW AT ANY MOMENT. IF ONLY THERE WERE A FEW MORE HOURS OF DAYLIGHT.

FORGET IT, MATE — WE'RE ALL TOO TIRED TO GO ON ANY FURTHER.

RELUCTANTLY JAKE ORDERED THE NATIVES TO SET UP CAMP.

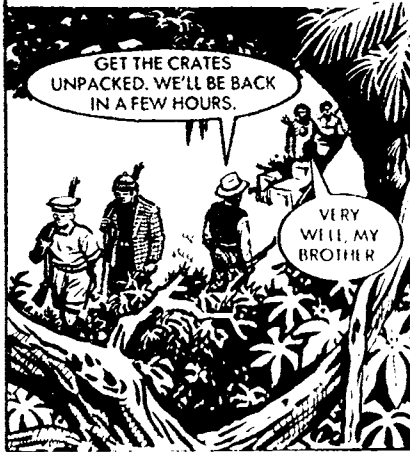
EVEN AS THEY SETTLED DOWN FOR THE NIGHT, IT BECAME CLEAR THAT THE PROSPECTOR COULD NOT GET THE TREASURE OFF HIS MIND.



DANGER OR NOT, I'M GOING TO BE ON THAT MOUNTAIN AT FIRST LIGHT.

GOOD FOR YOU — NOW GET SOME SLEEP.

JAKE WAS UP AT DAWN, READY TO MOVE ONCE MORE. DEREK AND BILLY ACCOMPANIED HIM, BUT THE INDIANS REMAINED BEHIND.



GET THE CRATES UNPACKED. WE'LL BE BACK IN A FEW HOURS.

VERY WELL, MY BROTHER

A SHORT WALK BROUGHT THE SEARCHERS TO THE EDGE OF A STEEP PRECIPICE. AT THE BOTTOM FLOWED THE WIDE RIVER WHERE DON HERNANDEZ HAD LANDED FOUR CENTURIES EARLIER.

WELL,
WE'VE FOUND
YOUR VOLCANO, JAKE.
BUT WHERE'S THE
NAZI CRUISER?

YOU'LL
SEE. FOLLOW
ME UP THE SLOPE
A LITTLE
WAY.



THE MEN SCRAMBLED
ON UNTIL THEY
REACHED A GOOD
VANTAGE POINT.

THERE'S
YOUR ENEMY
SHIP, BOYS.

BLIMEY!
THEY DON'T
WANT TO ATTRACT
ATTENTION DO
THEY?



DEREK WAS RIGHT. THE GERMANS
HAD ANCHORED THE SHIP BENEATH
A MASSIVE OVERHANG OF ROCK, IN
ORDER TO AVOID PRYING EYES.

JAKE SHOWED LITTLE INTEREST IN THE CRUISER.
HIS MAIN CONCERN WAS THE TREASURE WHICH
HE BELIEVED WAS BURIED BENEATH THE SPOT
WHERE HE NOW STOOD.



BUT THE TWO SAILORS FELT
THAT THE EXPLOSIVES COULD BE
PUT TO A MUCH BETTER USE.



BILLY MERELY WANTED TO DISABLE THE SHIP FURTHER AND THEN TRY TO CONTACT THE BRITISH AND INFORM THEM OF THE ENEMIES WHEREABOUT. DEREK DISAGREED WITH THIS PLAN HOWEVER.



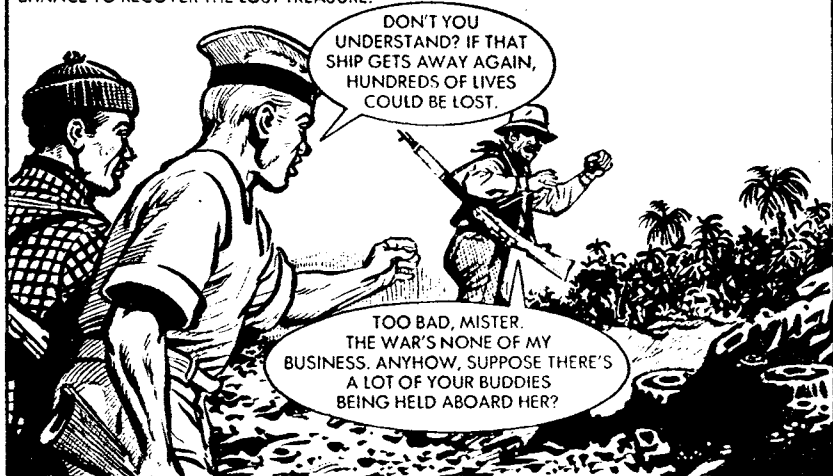
DEREK WAS CONFIDENT THERE WERE NO BRITISH SAILORS ABOARD FOR REASONS HE HAD OFTEN HEARD DISCUSSED IN THE MESS.



THAT MADE SENSE — BILLY WAS QUICKLY WON OVER. UNFORTUNATELY THEY HAD BOTH RECKONED WITHOUT CONSULTING JAKE.



THE PROSPECTOR COULD NOT BE PERSUADED TO PART WITH ANY OF HIS PRECIOUS EXPLOSIVES. HE WAS CERTAIN THAT THIS WAS HIS LAST CHANCE TO RECOVER THE LOST TREASURE.



FOR JAKE THE BIG PROBLEM WAS THAT THE VOLCANO WAS READY TO ERUPT AT ANY MOMENT.



THE TRIO CONTINUED TO ARGUE ALL THE WAY BACK DOWN TO THE TREE-LINE BUT THE SAILORS HAD NO EFFECT ON JAKE'S CONSCIENCE. LITTLE DID THEY KNOW THAT DANGER LURKED NEAR.



AS THE TARGETS WALKED WITHIN EASY RANGE, THE AMBUSHERS OPENED FIRE. JAKE FELL INSTANTLY WITH A HEAD WOUND.



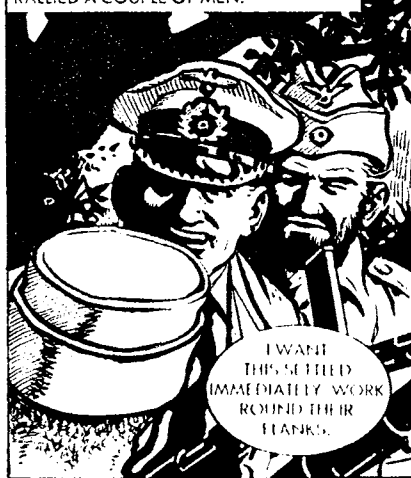
LEAVING THE PROSPECTOR AT THE SPOT WHERE HE FELL. THE SAILORS LEAPT INTO ACTION WITH A VENGEANCE. BILLY WAS THE FIRST TO OPEN FIRE.



THE TWO SETTLED DOWN TO GIVE THE ENEMY A DIFFICULT TASK EVEN THOUGH THEY WERE OUTNUMBERED.



THE SKIRMISH WAS BECOMING A STALEMATE. ANGRILY THE GERMAN OFFICER RALLIED A COUPLE OF MEN.



SWIFTLY AND SILENTLY THE TWO GERMANS STALKED ROUND TO COME INTO RANGE BEHIND THEIR PREY. HERE THEY WERE PRESENTED WITH AN EASY TARGET.



THERE WAS A MOMENT'S DELAY WHICH PROVED FATAL TO THE SNIPERS. BEFORE THEY COULD FIRE A SHOT, DEATH STRUCK IN THE FORM OF SHARP INDIAN ARROWS.



THE NATIVES, TIRED OF WAITING FOR THEIR FRIENDS' RETURN, HAD DECIDED TO LOOK FOR THEM INSTEAD. THEY HAD ARRIVED IN THE NICK OF TIME TO USE THEIR PRIMITIVE WEAPONS WITH SKILL AND COURAGE.



THE STARTLED GERMANS TURNED THEIR ATTENTION TO THE NEW DIRECTION OF ATTACK. THE INDIANS USED EXPERT CUNNING AND WERE NOWHERE TO BE SEEN.



THE TIDE WAS ONCE AGAIN IN DEREK'S AND BILLY'S FAVOUR. THEY DID THEIR SHARE OF THE FIGHTING WITH RELISH.



FINALLY THE GERMANS REALISED THAT FURTHER RESISTANCE WAS FUTILE. NOT WISHING MORE CASUALTIES, THEIR OFFICER ORDERED A WITHDRAWAL.



THE SCRAP OVER, THE SAILORS AND INDIANS BROKE FROM COVER TOGETHER. ONE PROBLEM CLOUDED THE VICTORY THOUGH.



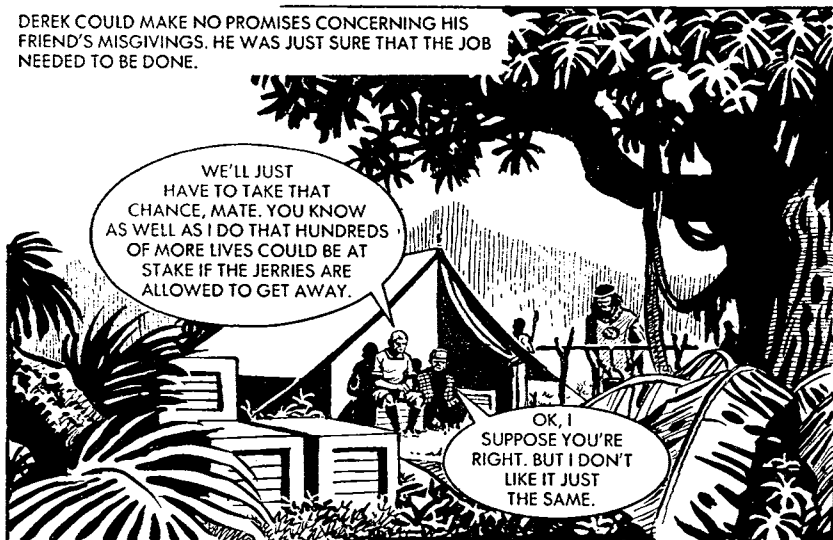
THE PROSPECTOR LAY IN A BAD WAY, BUT THE SAILORS WERE RELIEVED TO SEE THAT AT LEAST HE WAS ALIVE. THEY DECIDED TO RETURN TO CAMP WITH HIM.



BACK AT THE CAMP, JAKE WAS TREATED AND LEFT UNCONSCIOUS IN HIS BED WHILE DEREK AND BILLY MADE NEW PLANS.



DEREK COULD MAKE NO PROMISES CONCERNING HIS FRIEND'S MISGIVINGS. HE WAS JUST SURE THAT THE JOB NEEDED TO BE DONE.



THERE WAS STILL THE PROBLEM OF JAKE'S TREASURE. THE SAILORS WOULD NEED TO USE ALL OF HIS DYNAMITE IF THEIR PLAN WAS TO SUCCEED.



IT MEANS HIS GOLD WILL STAY BURIED ON THAT MOUNTAIN. HE'LL KILL US WHEN HE FINDS OUT.

I DON'T KNOW ABOUT THAT. MAYBE HE'LL UNDERSTAND.

AT THAT MOMENT, TO THEIR AMAZEMENT, JAKE SUDDENLY SPOKE. HIS VOICE WAS WEAK BUT CLEAR ENOUGH — HE UNDERSTOOD ALL RIGHT.



AND YOU NEEDN'T WORRY — YOUR PALS ARE BEING HELD UNDER GUARD IN THE TOWN. I HEARD THE COPS TALKING, BUT I DIDN'T TELL YOU BECAUSE I WANTED THE TREASURE.

BUT NOT NOW — HE URGED THEM TO TAKE THE EXPLOSIVES TO SINK THEIR TARGET.

THEY KNEW HOW MUCH IT ALL MEANT TO THE OLD ROGUE. THEIR WORDS OF THANKS WERE HEART-FELT.



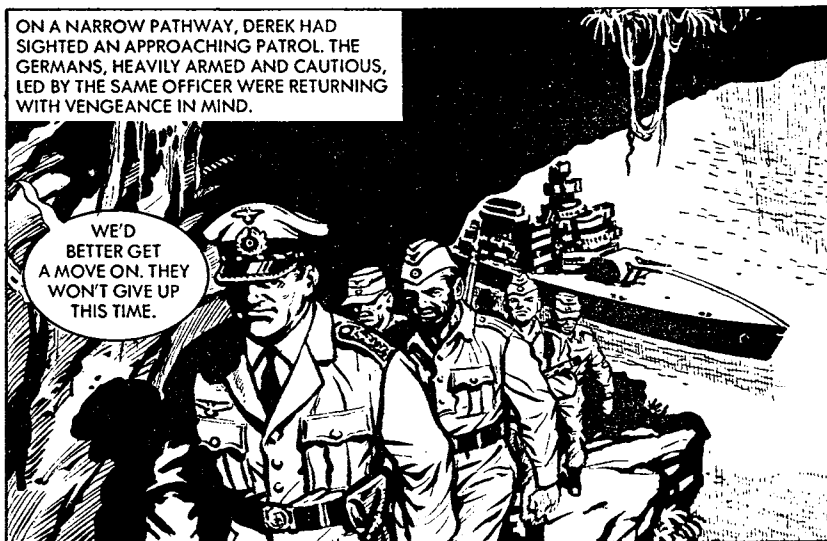
WITH SOME DIFFICULTY THEY WERE ABLE TO EXPLAIN THEIR INTENTION TO THE INDIANS AND WERE RELIEVED WHEN THEY AGREED TO CO-OPERATE.



MARCHING BACK TO THE TARGET AREA WITH DETERMINATION, THE WOULD-BE SOLDIERS WERE SURPRISED THAT NO GUARDS WERE POSTED OUT TO GREET THEM.



ON A NARROW PATHWAY, DEREK HAD SIGHTED AN APPROACHING PATROL. THE GERMANS, HEAVILY ARMED AND CAUTIOUS, LED BY THE SAME OFFICER WERE RETURNING WITH VENGEANCE IN MIND.



REALISING THE URGENCY OF THEIR TASK, DEREK, BILLY AND SOME INDIANS TOOK THE EXPLOSIVES AND RACED TOWARDS THE OVERHANG. BEHIND THEM THE INDIANS RAINED ARROWS DOWN ON THE ENEMY BELOW.



ON THE SHIP, GERMAN CREWMEN MADE DESPERATE EFFORTS TO HALT THE ATTACKERS' PROGRESS, BUT THE DEMOLITION PARTY JUST KEPT RUNNING.



THE GUNFIRE WAS NOT
TOTALLY INACCURATE
HOWEVER, ONE NATIVE DIED
IN THAT HEROIC RUSH.



DODGING THE ENEMY BULLETS, THE TWO SAILORS AND AN
INDIAN COMPANION FINALLY REACHED THEIR GOAL. ON TOP
OF THE GIANT OVERHANG THEY WERE SAFE FROM FURTHER
HARASSMENT.



THEY FOUND PLENTY OF CRACKS AND CREVICES IN WHICH TO LAY THEIR EXPLOSIVES. THE TASK WENT FEVERISHLY ON ----



RETURNING TO THE MAIN GROUP, THE DEMOLITION SQUAD FOUND THEIR FRIENDS UNDER GREAT PRESSURE. THE ENEMY PATROL WAS MAKING HEADWAY.



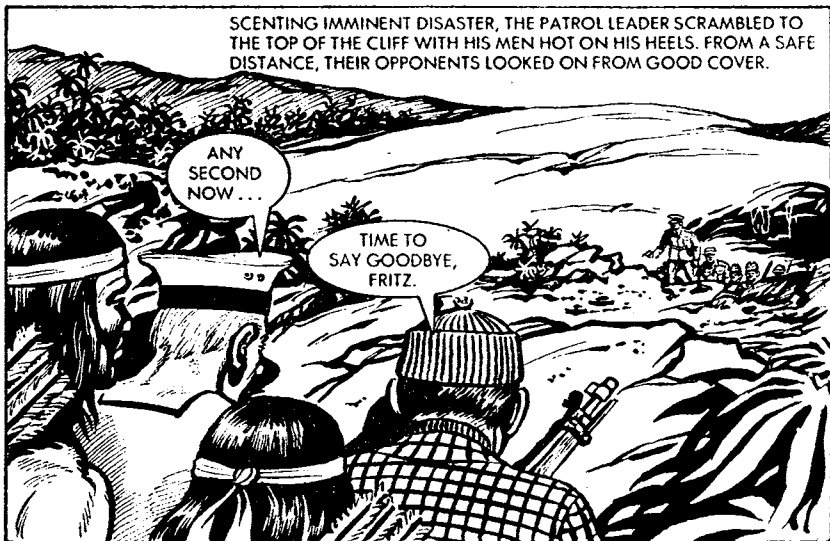
NERVOUSLY DEREK
TOUCHED A MATCH TO
THE END OF THE FUSE.



FROM THE ROCKS BELOW, THE ENEMY WERE
AMAZED TO SEE THEIR ATTACKERS FLEE.
THEIR OFFICER QUICKLY REALISED THAT
VICTORY WAS NOT COMPLETE YET.



SCENTING IMMINENT DISASTER, THE PATROL LEADER SCRAMBLED TO
THE TOP OF THE CLIFF WITH HIS MEN HOT ON HIS HEELS. FROM A SAFE
DISTANCE, THEIR OPPONENTS LOOKED ON FROM GOOD COVER.





ON THE CRUISER BELOW, STARTLED SAILORS COULD ONLY STAND AND STARE AS THE OVERHANG CUT FREE AND DROPPED TOWARDS THEM.





WHEN THE SMOKE CLEARED ENOUGH, THE SABOTEURS EMERGED FROM THEIR HIDING PLACE TO SURVEY THE DAMAGE. EVEN THEY WERE SHOCKED INTO SILENCE — FOR A FEW SECONDS.



JAKE WAS ON THE SCENE TOO NOW. WHILE THE BATTLE HAD RAGED, HE HAD MANAGED TO DRAG HIMSELF ALONG TO WITNESS THE OUTCOME.



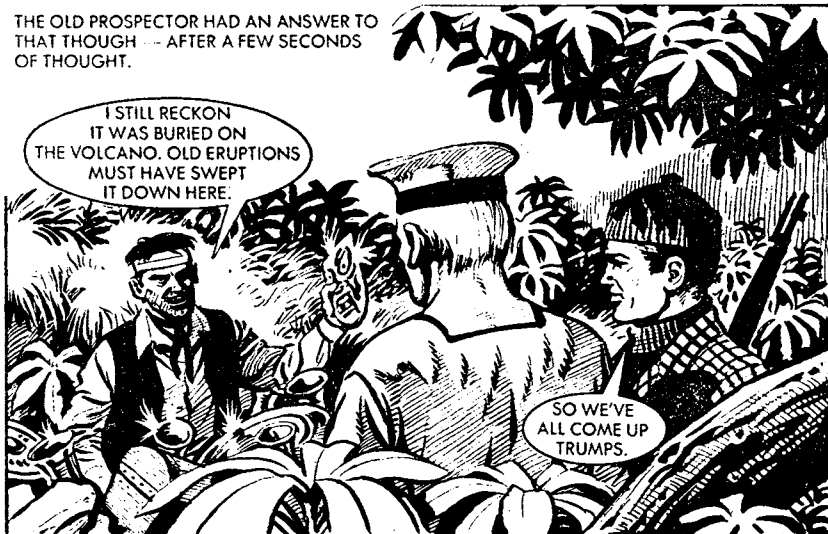
DEREK AND BILLY SAW HIM THEN, BUT IN THE SAME INSTANT THEY SAW SOMETHING ELSE . . . A GLINT OF GOLD. IT WAS THE FABLED TREASURE.



THE LOST HOARD BURIED BY THE SPANIARDS LAY NEAR TO THE SPOT WHERE THE OVERHANG HAD FALLEN AWAY. IT WAS ALL THERE, MASSES OF IT.



THE OLD PROSPECTOR HAD AN ANSWER TO THAT THOUGH --- AFTER A FEW SECONDS OF THOUGHT.



BUT THEN TRAGEDY STRUCK. JAKE WAS VERY WEAK — THE EXCITEMENT PROVED TOO MUCH FOR HIM. HE KEELER OVER UNCONSCIOUS ONCE MORE.



HE SHOULDN'T
HAVE LEFT HIS
BED!

WE'D
BETTER HAVE A
LOOK AT HIM.

A QUICK CHECK CONFIRMED
THEIR WORST FEARS.
JAKE WAS DEAD.

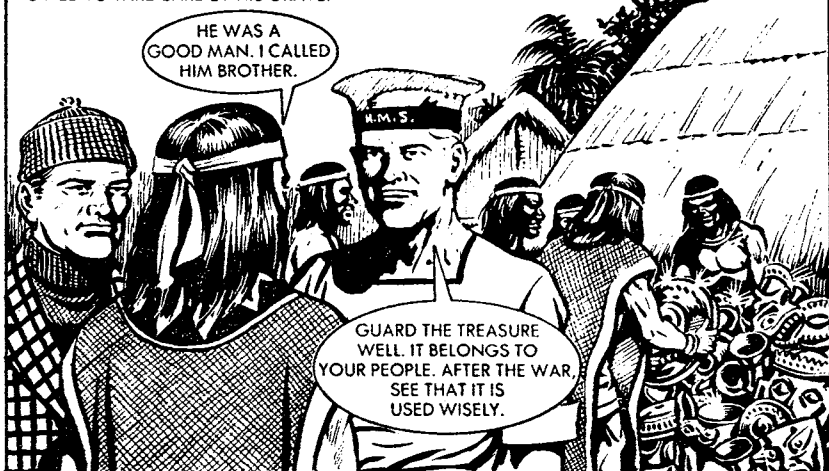


THAT WOUND
WAS WORSE THAN
WE THOUGHT.

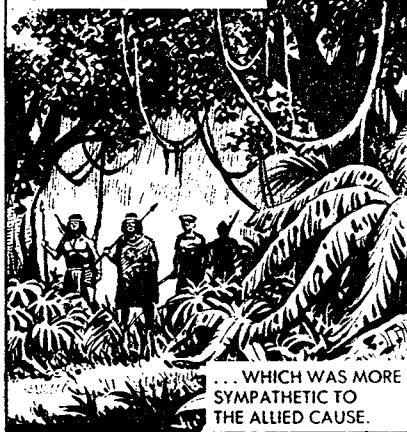
HE GOT HIS
TREASURE, MATE. HE
DIED A HAPPY MAN.

FOR WHAT IT
WAS WORTH, DEREK
WAS RIGHT.

IT WAS A SAD PARTY INDEED THAT RETURNED TO THE INDIAN VILLAGE. JAKE WAS BURIED IN SACRED GROUND AND THE CHIEF VOWED TO TAKE CARE OF HIS GRAVE.



THE NEXT STEP WAS FOR THE NATIVES TO GUIDE THE TWO SAILORS INTO A NEIGHBOURING COUNTRY...



WITH THE MAIN PORT IN VIEW, HERE THEY PARTED COMPANY WITH THE INDIANS FOR GOOD.

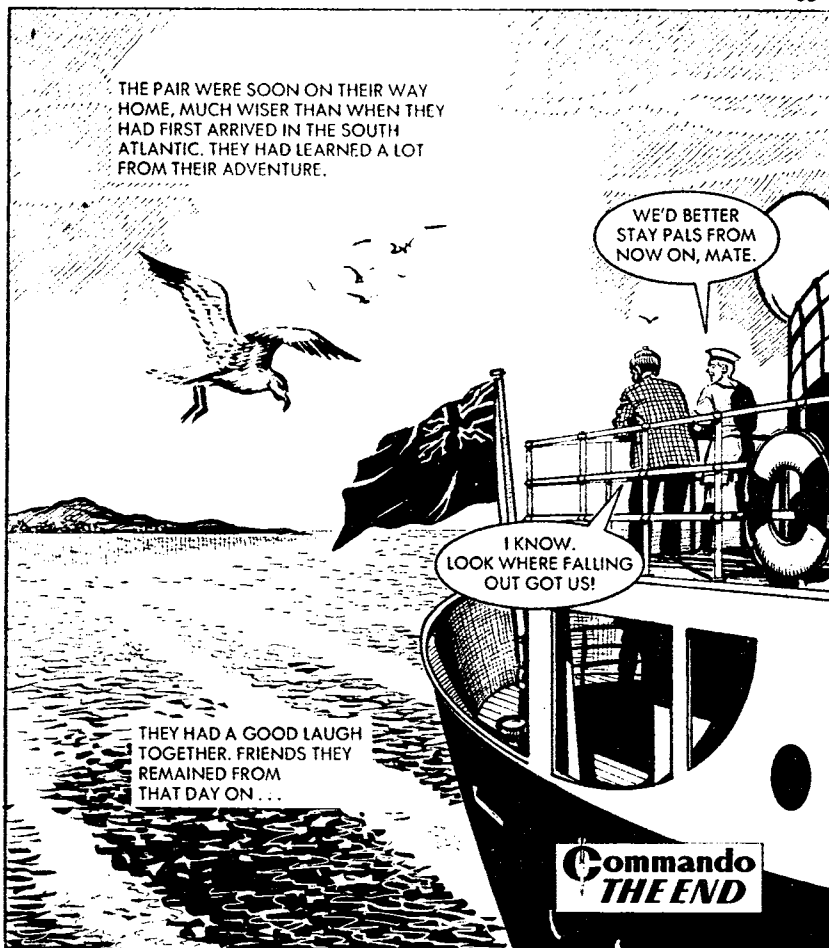


AFTER ENTERING THE CITY, THE SAILORS MADE STRAIGHT FOR THE BRITISH EMBASSY. THE CONSUL WELCOMED THEM WARMLY.



HE SOON HAD EVEN BETTER NEWS FOR DEREK AND BILLY. IT CONCERNED THE BRITISH PRISONERS HELD IN THE COUNTRY THE TWO SAILORS HAD JUST FLED FROM.





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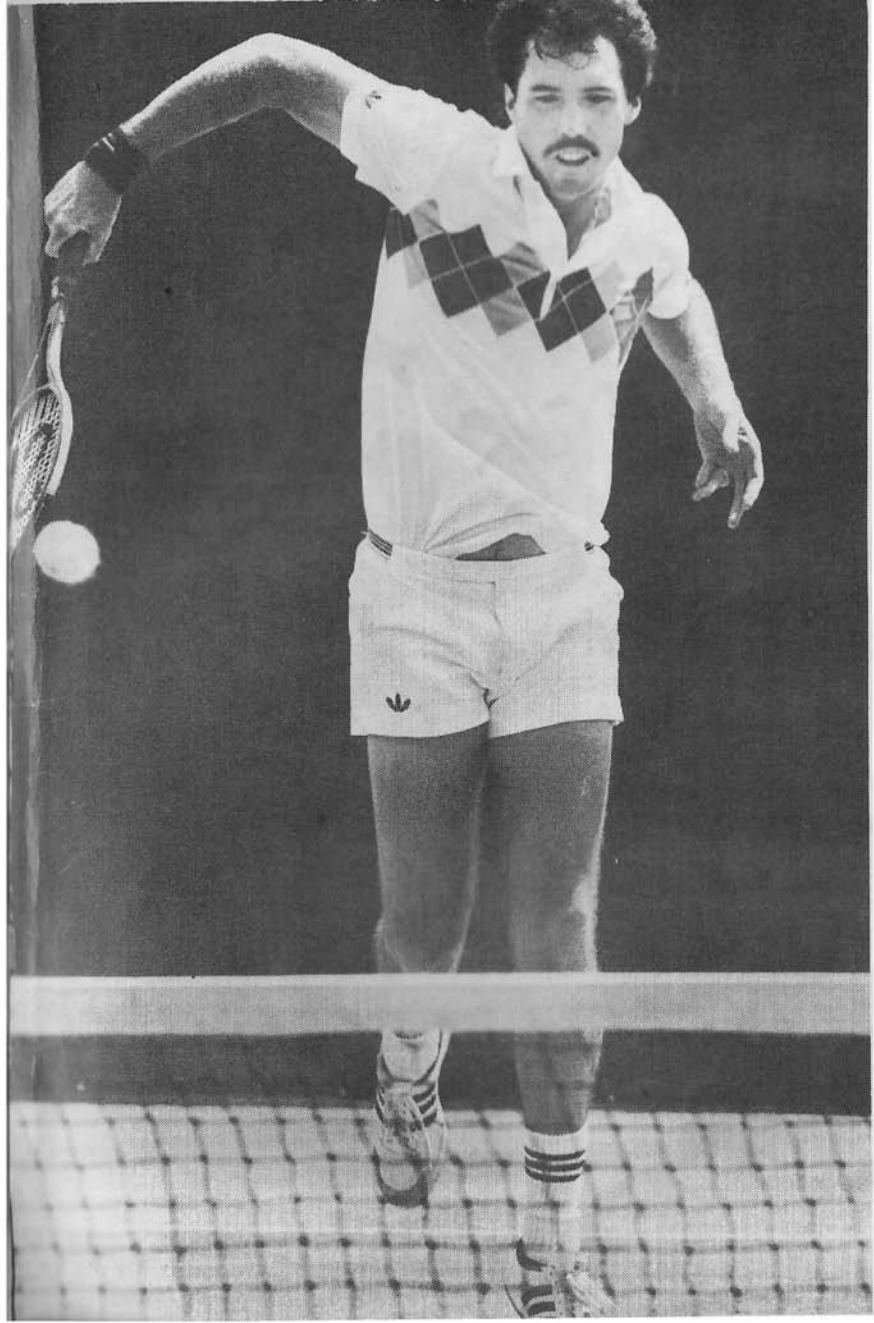
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Stars Of Tennis — Steve Denton



THE CONQUERORS

FOR months a single German cruiser had been wreaking havoc amongst British merchant ships in the South Atlantic. Now at last it had been located by a cruiser of the Royal Navy, and as the two evenly-matched vessels clashed, their big guns booming out, each crew hoped for victory.

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